

PATHS OF JUNE

By

DOROTHY STOCKBRIDGE



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DOROTHY STOCKBRIDGE



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TO MY FATHER

the finest man I have known, gentlest of poets and philosophers, of kindly wit and mellow wisdom, whose companionship has been and is more near and dear to me than my most secret thoughts.

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PATHS OF JUNE

THE FELLOWSHIP OF POETS

I

BECause I can think in stars and measure
the world in rose-leaves,
Because the dusk is to me
The hour when the spirits of violets dead
Commune with each other,
Claim I the right to dream as you dream,
To love as you love,
To worship the infinite Being in terms of the part;
Claim I the right to sorrow, as you, and rejoice,
To sing the triumphs of nations,
To denounce the ills of the world,
To scatter the blooms of devotion
Before the fair feet of my lady,
Whom never I had nor shall have,
Yet whom through the vagrant years
I have loved and desired.
To sing the glad praise of my lover,
To tremble beneath his glances and sigh with his
sighs
Who never has sighed nor shall sigh,
Whose eyes I never shall see.

The Fellowship of Poets

II

Methinks 'twas but yestereve, deep in the heart of
the evening,

I heard the swish of a garment,
And glancing forth from the casement beheld
The edge of a violet robe caught on the points of the
stars.

Who was it had passed?

Methinks 'twas but yestermorn
I heard a galloping horse upon the hard roadbed,
And ran to the window
And peered out into the morning,
But the dust was thick in my eyes
And I could not see the rider.

Who was it had passed?

III

You and I are the echoes that haunt the mountains.
If we echo untruly we miss our function.

You and I are the winds that call from the sunset.

If we call not truly we miss our reason for being.

You and I are the makers of stars,

If we set our stars awry we fail in our trust
And our songs are jangling and out of tune.

The Fellowship of Poets

IV

“She is ill,” they said on the countryside.
“Her lover died.
She lies in her lonely room on the sun-swept hill
And moans to die.”
I hastened into the fields and gathered daisies,
Eager armfuls, white and yellow,
And carried them to her lonely room on the sun-
swept hill—
Joys to prick the blackness of her grief
As stars the night.
And this I did for the sake of a song
I heard in the twilight.
The song had no beginning nor any ending,
And the singer was hidden.

V

There are many who scoff.
The wreckers of civilization stand in the streets.
Clear your eyes of the dust of their falling temples,—
Above the dust shine the deathless stars.
Climb ye up to the lonely housetops,
Gather ye moonbeams.
Ye will need garlands of stars to enchain your captive
fancies.
The wind will throw in your lap
Golden stars to clasp the mantle of your dreams.

The Fellowship of Poets

VI

Let me sing my verse of the song.
Time is hastening, hastening over the hills.
Let me sing my verse of the song.
Others are singing;
There are voices across the stars.
I ask not to sing alone,
But only that some poor shepherd, weary and worn,
Passing near to my bower may hear and be comforted.
Let me sing my verse of the song.

VII

Come to it lightly out of the hay sweet field,
Laugh at your singing as men at their work.
Sit beneath green boughs where apple-blooms hover
Like butterflies caught in a net of green.
Sit in the shade and laugh at your singing.

VIII

Measure your languid verse in the lap of the noon,
Teach the light triplets to run with the feet of gay
children,
Bind up your thought in the heart of a rose,
Tie the petals with shreds of a rainbow.
If you must sing of night
Picture the star clasp on her bosom.

The Fellowship of Poets

If you must sing of storm
Picture the ingle-nook and the warm clasp of hands.

IX

There are two spirits in my heart.
The one is myself.
The other is gowned in a tattered rainbow.
I do not know her,
For she has wandered down the long road from a
strange land.
She sits at the sunset gates
And watches the world and sings.
Myself sits by the fireside,
And watches the embers, crooning softly.
Sometimes the stranger's voice startles me there
And I go to the doorway.
Our eyes meet across the sunset,—my other self and
I,—
There is in them a strange recognition,
But we do not speak.

X

Bind not the feet of love in the bonds of desire,
Build him a cage of sunbeams and song and light
laughter.
Hold him not in your arms lest he flee affrighted,
Wear him in your cap, enthrone him in your eyes,

The Fellowship of Poets

Flaunt him abroad in your speech,
Never be niggardly.

Strew his bright roses before the feet of the world,
Laugh and withhold not.

He will not wander far and will soon return
And crown your hair with a wreath of crumpled rose
leaves.

XI

I have gathered my fancies into a net of song.
Take up my flowers with careless fingers
And scatter them by the roadside.
Who shall regret them?

The song is strung on a thread of sunbeams.
If a shadow break the thread, what does it matter?
My heart will reach forth light fingers of dreams
And tie the broken ends into a knot.
The lost flowers will laugh and my heart will rejoice
in song.
The song has no beginning nor any ending,
And the singer is hidden.

WORDSWORTH

NOT superman, but human, more than most
Sensitive, to suffer and enjoy;
Holding through life, and at what bitter cost,
The simple heart that swayed the untutored boy;
Using the simple speech that taught his ears
Rough music ere he reached his manhood's prime;
Pondering deep through the eventful years
Impassioned truths, unbound by space or time.

No juggler he of pretty word or phrase,
But, like the hidden thrush at even hour,
Pours from his heart his heart's impassioned power,
The crown and garnered sweetness of his days;
By times is silent, and again he fills
With shepherd pipings all the Quantock hills.

WHEN I AM OLD

WHEN I am old shall I grow still and sigh,
When I am old,
And think my dreaming past and hope gone by,
And life grown dull, love being dead, and die
When I am old?
Such I have seen, but oh, not I, not I!

Let me still know that dawns are smiling cold
Across the bosom of our forest pool,
And evenings with still brows are bending down
On field and town,
And noonday's warmth and midnight's starry cold
When I am old!

Let me still know that song is good and laughter,
That men are brave and women still are true,
And friends are worthy trust, and after, after
Life that is sweet comes sweeter death and you

Let me still know that in some other place
Through some diviner air
Shall bloom the secret wonder of your face
Some other where.

ENTREATY

THIS most I crave, if even such as I
 May crave such things,—to hear the tempest
 moan
And not to fear;
To see the wild sprays fly,
To hear
The swish of cloud-wreaths on tall peaks of stone;
To suffer grief and pain, to stand alone;
To sense the universe some God has made,
Grow old and sick and sad, grow faint and die
But not to be afraid!

DEATH AND MEMORY

O H Azrael, the angel men call Death
And poets call eternal Life and Rest,
There is a little rose upon thy breast
Not withered in thy stern and blasting breath,
That thou hast picked upon the banks of Lethe
In the Elysian Gardens of the blest.
If life and joy be dearest this next best,
Shade of the light thy mantle darkeneth,

One said, "Lo, Death was in the house last night.
We felt his icy breath all through the room.
His shadow fell across the firelight,
And chilled our hearts and filled our lives with
gloom."

But on the hearth what is it that I see?
Lo, Death has dropped his rose of memory.

O CENTURIES

O CENTURIES!

You have built high your myriad dead to make
this sum.

In age-old mysteries

Your dim processions come,—

Christ on the cross and Nero in the mire,

All hopes and fears

And prides of Rome and Babylon and Tyre,

And the world fire

Of Helen's smiles and Heloise's tears;

All children and their laughter, and the eyes

Of long dead beauties, lighting with their gleams

Some Sultan's dreams;

And for our pride have built and cast away

Empires more dead to memory than they.

Out on you, O long dead and passionless

First cause of all! In the volcanic stress

Of the first birth

Of ocean and of earth

What wanton dream of yours builded the face

Of this brown beggar eating roasted meat

In Beefsteak Johnny's Place?

O Centuries

What children laughed and died that these might run
Bright headed in the sun
On high uplands,
Dew on their feet and flowers in their hands?

Strange web upon whose shining surface lies
High heart and high emprise,
Riverside on a Sunday afternoon and ships
With the sea against their lips,
The warm breath of the city, busses fleet
From street to street,
Buildings high as heaven, and the span
Of bridges, pure and cold, the noblest work of man;
Railroads belching fire
Around the earth, crimson against the night,
And silver white
Through wide sea ways ships driving, sails unfurled,
Or strained with throb of wheel and hum of wire
Bearing from light to light
The produce of a world to feed a world.

With my closed eyes I see
Long fields, gasping and thirsty in the sun,
And men who work in groups or silently
Move down the rustling corn rows one by one.
Or on some July evening see again
Green pastures whipped with rain—
So still and far!
But here where subways are

O Centuries

And crowds of tired men and women pour
From shop to shop and store to store,
A woman whom the lips of children kissed
Trudges, bad-tempered, with her shopping list!
What irony did your cold heart bestir,
O Centuries, when first you dreamed of her?

Life holds me close. I only dimly see
Gigantic shapes that rise
Against far skies,
Shadows of little things grown monstrously,
Yet dimly feel
Those forces fierce and few
That first creation knew
And are upon us now for woe or weal.
How could you know that more than might of kings
Such little things
As the pipe dream
Of wheels revolving in expanding steam,
Born of the dust that was a living brain,
Might lift again
The shadow of world chaos at our door,
Or that the scream
Of hungry children crying in their pain
Might lay that shadow in the dust once more?

Oh, first, great Cause, what silent dreams have bound
Your eyes on those still nights before the stars
Crossed the last bars

O Centuries

Of being and began their timeless round,
And earth and ocean, deep in endless deep,
Aroused from sleep,
And the first passions and the last awoke
And stirred quiescent matter till it felt and spoke?
Did you dream then that the end of all was this—
To meet and kiss
And die and drift apart down the still wind,
Leaving behind
No faintest trace
But a chance trick of smile
Or line of brow or chin that lives awhile
In some child's face?
Or was all end to make some perfect thing,
Or peace or happiness, who knows?
Or a baby's hand, or a starlit night in spring,
Or the petals of a rose?

ON YOUR BREAST I LIE

ON your breast I lie,
O wind of the night, wind of death.
My pulse beats low with your breath,
And strange shadows pass
Waivering-footed over the sodden grass,
And strange things are born and die,
And I
Grow still and aware at the cool suspense of your
breath,
Wind of the night, wind of death.

I who was not afraid at the touch
Of the cool hands of grief,
Thinking beyond measure,
Loving too much,
Forgetting my self-belief
I have lost my treasure.
I am grown afraid with the fear of little things,
The old world-weakness catches in my breath,
And the rush of your wings,
And the sting of your pride flung fearless in my face
From the stars and the farthermost space

On Your Breast I Lie

Wake only poor discontent and the voice of anguish
loud

In my heart once still and proud,
Wind of the night, wind of death,

Some day I shall rise and fling
This terror out of my heart,
And will turn apart
And sing

For my own pleasure under some quiet hill
Where the air is still
And blue violets are,
And afar
Blue hills cut into a bluer sky,
And the pangs of men pass by
And my soul draws near,
And then perchance if I please, I shall climb to a
star

Or pass to some hidden brook
And lie and look

In the clear, brown, shining pools, and sleep in the
shade of a tree

As it pleases me.

And it will be all one,

For I shall laugh in your face and put off fear
From year to year,
And the catch in my breath
And the chill of my heart will be gone,
Oh, wind of the night, wind of death.

SUNSET

THE flowers have faded, every one,
The leaves are dead.

I found the garden stripped of bloom.
The soft-eyed nymphs attendant on the sun
Heap the flushed rose leaves for his crimson bed
Low in the west, and from their careless fingers
Caressed with purple gloom,
The lilac blossoms trickle, one by one.

MOOD

YOU are singing of love, but how can you love to-
night
When the wind blows cold from the sea?
Satyr-love, ah yes,
Riotously
In the wide moonlight
Opaque and white
And tangible as a bridal dress.
Just for an hour, perhaps, the wild, sweet pain
Were I never to see your face again.

You are singing of love. Ah, God, what do you
know
Of the world-old fire?
Love of the drawing room and sick desire,—
Take up your lute and go.
Jove comes to me to-night as he came of old
In a flood of gold,
And the wind blows cold
With a hint of snow.

TO K. V.

FRRIEND, from the womb of half-remembered things

My heart turns back to you
Inevitably as that April blooms anew
After the passing of a thousand springs.
Sure as the sunlight that succeeds the rain,
Peace after pain,
Or the bee's flight to seek the clover,
Or love to meet the lover,
After long parting we should meet again,
Nor space nor time avail to hold apart
Kinship of mind and heart.

I have watched you sometimes when the lamplight lies

Across your brow and hair,
And the swift lights and shadows in your eyes
Change unaware,
And gropingly my thought has tried to trace
The child face I remember in your face.
But that unchanging thing, the soul of you
That once I knew,
Slips back again to its accustomed place,

To K. V.

So strange-familiar, so familiar-strange
I do not know the change,
But feel that sweet fulfilment that one knows
When the first rose
Blossoms again in June beside the door,
Opening pale petals to the sun—
The sum of earth's lost beauty, which alone
Perfection lacked before.

I have no gift to give for what you bring
Rich beyond measuring,
Yet feel no shame
To take, unworthy, at your hands that name
Of friend, most sacred, for I too have seen
There is no little thing, no petty, nothing mean
In the clear light of faith that lies between
High heart and heart.
There most unworthiness takes something on
Of beauty from the ideal it leans upon,
Needing no justification. Joy the prize,
And to look life in the eyes.

LOSS

INTO the dark I peer,
The dark that lies
So heavy on my heart,
Stretching my hands to tear the veil apart.
In the breathless hush I hold my breath to hear,
But your voice is dumb.
And silent, out of the void, the shadows come,
Shrouding again your half unveiled eyes.

MASEFIELD

AN IMPRESSION

IT'S the month of Mars, the war god,
And the hour's the hour of death,
And down the cobbled street-way
Comes the day's last shivering breath.
Across the narrow street end
The red tide's at the flood,
And against the crimson sunset
Stand dark house-eaves, dripping blood.

*But hey, and ho, for a land of daffodils,
Of a smile across the meadows and a glory on the hills,
Of a green mist in the willow and blue violets in the fen,
Where the song-sparrow's a-twitter, and the robin's back again.*

It's the month of Mars, the war god,
And the day is on the wane.
The glory of the sunset
Fills the city's heart like pain.

And the crowd turns up to meet it
Faces pinched and white that seem
Eager, pensive, strained, expectant,
Like lost faces in a dream.

*Then hey, and ho, for a land of daffodils,
For a smile across the valley and a glory on the hills
Where the smoke of distant cities fades before the
sunset gleam,
Where the cares and sorrows thronging,
And the old, unanswered longing
Fade like faces in a dream.*

He came swinging down on the windy side
And the roll of the sea was in his stride.
He was brown of face and quiet-eyed
One would judge him a seaman by his looks,
And yet a man with a taste for books,
Thoughtful friends and quiet hours,
Country roads and birds and flowers.
And as he came through the quiet street
He cast one eye at the forward moon,
And suiting his thought to a measure meet,
He sang an old sea-faring tune:

*“Good-by, sweet Mary of Plymouth.
The fresh’ning wind blows cold.
We’re off for Valparaiso
To try for Spanish gold.*

Masefield

*"Then heave all together!
We're off from Plymouth Sound.
Hark to the music of the jangling chains!
We're off and outward bound.*

*"One cheer for merry England,
And one for our empty hold.
We won't be needing ballast
When we've got the Spanish gold."*

Now as he paused and lingered at the corner
As though in doubt, through the half-open door
Of a low dwelling where a noisy crowd
Of children wrangled, came a clear, sweet voice,
Divinely fresh, and clear and very young.
I saw him turn and listen, and the babel
Of voices hushed a moment. Some one said,
"It's Lilias. It's the song she made herself."
Then a pause while the sweet ringing notes
Poured from the inner gloom. And then a shout.
"Ki yi! I'll beat you all down to the sign
Of the Blue Heron." And the noisy crowd
Swept down the rosy street and out of sight.
The voice came nearer. Dust rose in a cloud
Through the half open door, the swish and swing
Of the hard laboring broom filled in the pauses,
Then Lilias herself upon the step.
Scarce more than child she seemed, and sadly white
With indoor living; neither short nor tall,

With shoulders slightly stooped. Most wonderful
In her cheap dress and gaudy cotton apron,
And underneath the bib, a heart of light
That freed itself in song.

*“Listen, little children, listen while I tell you,—
There are other children happier than we.
Children of the air that walk the green streets of
Heaven,
Children of the waves that dance upon the silver sea.*

*“Children, little children, see the white gulls flying.
They, I think, are spirits of the children that have
gone.
All across the harbor see the gray waves dying;
The sea babies are dead, and the sad winds moan.*

*“Birds of the white wings,
Take me away.
The wind sings in the bay.
Hark how the wind sings!
Birds of the white wings,
Take me away.”*

She dropped the broom. With arms outspread
She stood beside the dingy door,
Lost in the wonder overhead,
Deaf to the city's distant roar.

Masefield

The street is for the moment still.
The impatient stamp of a horse's hoof
Rings on the cobbles. To and fro
The eager sunset fairies go
Over the salty scented sea,
Weaving a gorgeous canopy
Of golden warp and woof.

"Hullo!" The charm snapped. Turning frightened
eyes

She saw the smiling sailor, hat in hand,
Upon the step. A strangely taking face
With the wide, serious eyes and frank, sweet smile.
The little woman, prematurely wise,
Looked and was reassured, and smiled in turn.
A strange thing, such a smile. A friendship born,
Grown, and perfected in a single glance.
A rare smile; such as an old man might count
Upon the fingers of one hand.

The sunset faded and the night came on,
And on the step before the dingy door
The sun-burned sailor and the pale-faced maid
Sat talking. He with bared head thrown well back
And scanty, forceful gestures of a man
Who holds tight reins upon a mighty soul,
Told of the things that he had seen and done
In many lands and under foreign skies,
On seas whose utmost ripple laps the pole.
And she, bent forward, chin on blue-veined hand,

With flushing cheeks and eyes alight with dreams,
Hung breathless on his words.

About her feet the vast, eternal tide
Stormed with wild laughter. She could feel the roll
Of the sea beauty, staggering in her stride,
Then plunging toward the ever-fading goal.

She heard the cordage creaking, and the sea
Hiss, and the ship's bells ringing out the hour,
And saw the wind-worn vessel suddenly
Blossom with shining whiteness like a flower.

She saw the decks scrubbed clean and white with
sand,
With little groups of sailors here and there,
And heard strange talk of many a palmy land,
And women with black eyes and shadowy hair.

She clutched his hand and shuddered at wild tales
Of stormy nights spent clinging to the spars,
Tossed by the fury of unbridled gales
Halfway between the ocean and the stars;

Tales of brave deeds and mean, of sudden death,
Of seekers stricken almost at the goal;
Of the sad flickerings of the failing breath,
And tragedies of body and of soul.

Masefield

And then she smiled, hearing of woodland ways
Leading among the everlasting hills;
Of bird-songs, brooks, and flowers, and summer
days;
Of fields of fern and nodding daffodils.

Then in a milder vein he spoke of hours
In his dim chamber; where the lamplight ends
A row of cherished books, fragrant as flowers
With memories, and seen through a blue wave
Of pipe smoke, eager faces, earnest, grave,
A group of chosen friends.

Raptly she sees, forgetting time and place,
Before her eyes the pageant of her dreams.
And fitfully across her upturned face
The light of the dim street lamp dimly streams.

The night moves on, the raw chill air grows bold,
The lurid sky reflects the city's light,
Till, seeing that she shivers with the cold,
The story-teller kisses her good-night,

And strides away adown the gusty street,
A moment silent, feeling something rise
And choke his breathing,—something very sweet,
Remembering her patient, grateful eyes.

He pauses at the corner, doubtfully,
For from the darkness he has left behind,
A strain of a familiar melody
Comes swirling to him on the gusty wind:

*“Children, little children, listen while I tell you,
There are wondrous countries that we shall never
know,
Glory and adventure, kindness and daring,
Out beyond the ocean where the bold winds blow.*

*“Birds of the white wings,
Take me away.
The wind sings in the bay.
Hark how the wind sings!
Birds of the white wings,
Take me away.”*

WHEN WINTER STIRS

WHEN winter stirs and wakes and lies wide-eyed,
Shaken with wonder as the green things start
Unbidden from his breast, I sometimes think
How love once grew in my quiescent heart!

THE SWALLOW

SEE the merry swallow, heart of mirth,
Lilting, tilting on the swaying bough,
Hear him shaking out his chatter o'er the unawakened
earth,
Flitting now.
Who can tell his meaning? Just a happy heart con-
tent
In the blue-swept firmament?
Neither ecstasy nor sorrow
Haunts his accents wild.
Just a careless chatte-
Like a child.

See the little mate upon her nest
Where the flickering shadow comes to rest,
Hear the flow of cheery crooning from his perch
above
Full of tenderness and love.
Where's the merry fellow seen but yesterday
Flaunting through the heavens his brave array?
Who has taught him in the night hours long
That strange new sweetness in his song?

TO A BUTTERFLY

AIRY-WINGED fancy, where art thou flying
O'er the mown fields where the daisies are dying?
Where dost thou roam?
Where,
In the wide regions of air,
Lieth thy home?
Drunk with the breath of the hay
I ponder thy flutter and sway.
Airy-winged sprite of an hour,
Dream of a flower,
Whither away?

Spirit a-tilt on the rose drooping there,
Dead in the beauty of morn were it never so fair,
A breath, and thou fleest.
Art thou the soul of the flower released,
Or the voice of its prayer?

Spirit of light and of motion,
Linger awhile.
Fain would I tell thee this notion
As fleeting as thou;

To a Butterfly

That when God made thee, I think it was not of a
smile!

See how thou wanderest, fitful as thought through the
years,

Bringing me now

Fancies too dainty for words, too tender for tears.

Spirit of light, thou hast fled

Vaguely away

Over the buttercup bed

Where the golden cups shed

A reflection of day.

Where hast thou gone on thy wandering, wavering
wings?

Where the blue bell swings?

Back to thy palace of white

In a lily's heart?

Yet still in my fancy I see thee, the fluttering thing
of delight

That thou art.

A LILY OF THE VALLEY

HAVE you ever seen a lily, a slender, virgin lily,
Growing in the valley where the brook runs
cool,

Leaning to the shallows where the ripples linger stilly,
Then purl and pass through stirring grass and
thoughtful, moss-green pool?

If you have not, then you know not shyest beauty,
frailest splendor.

In her modest maiden whiteness trembling by the
singing stream

She has caught the wistful prettiness of things serene
and tender

That children know whose fancies grow and fade
from dream to dream.

Go and seek her; you will find her where the water
lingers stilly

Ere it wanders to the river, silver gleaming, faint and
far.

And you'll know that earth and heaven were created
that a lily

Might fill the air with fragrance there where shine
and shadows are.

POUGHKEEPSIE

OH Poughkeepsie in the springtime when the apple
trees are blooming

And the lilacs are in blossom and white showers of
petals fall!

All the gardens foam with blossom,
Apple, peach and cherry blossom,
Riotous, unbridled blossom
Overflowing every wall.

In winter time your tawdry streets are dull and drab
and dreary,

Aswirl with winds that pirouette like dancers on a
floor,

But some golden day in springtime comes the robin's
signal cheery

And an army of gay blossoms bursts from every
garden door.

Such a carnival they celebrate you cannot hold or
bind them

Though you wall them in with masonry and make
the prison tall.

Poughkeepsie

Where'er you go, where'er you go you're always sure
to find them,
A merry mocking multitude o'erhanging every wall.

Where'er you go they follow you with perfume, flung
in showers,
And petals fallen on your path, like heaps of fragrant
snow,
And you dream you are in fairyland and laugh
among the flowers,
At the earth that you deserted half a hundred years
ago.

Oh Poughkeepsie in the springtime when the apple
trees are blooming,
And the lilacs are in blossom and white showers of
petals fall!
All the gardens foam with blossom.
Apple, peach and cherry blossom,
Riotous, unbridled blossom
Overflowing every wall.

MEETING

Moonlight on the white breast of the sea,
Sunlight on the white brow of the hill.
I stand upon the dim shores silently
And all the world is still.

Stars upon the forehead of the night,
Stars upon the bosom of the sea,
And high between them, gowned in pearly white,
A cloud floats wondrously.

Death within the ocean at my feet,
Life within the shadow of the hill.
I stand upon the moment when they meet
And all eternity is still.

PORTLAND HARBOR

OH, the salt is in my nostrils and the wind is in
my hair,
And the eager capes reach out to grasp the sea on
either hand.
There's the city out behind me, but I'm better here
than there,
For the ocean ships, the sailing ships come beating in
to Portland,
The grim and white-toothed ocean ships,
The fleeting, gray-winged sailing ships,
The gaunt and battered whaling ships
Come beating in to land.

The buoy out there is ringing, tossing in the waves
and singing
An ancient song of stormy nights and battered, sunken
hulls,
A clangng note across the waves to warn the ships of
Portland,
For the ocean ships, the sailing ships,
The gaunt and battered whaling ships
Come beating in to Portland beneath the circling
gulls.

Portland Harbor

There's a lighthouse on the rocky ledge before the gates of Portland,
A lighthouse on the jagged reef gnawed by white fangs of foam,
Twin blinking eyes that search the dark to find the ships of Portland,
The ocean ships, the sailing ships,
The gaunt and battered whaling ships,
The weary ships of Portland that come careening home.

Oh, the salt is in my nostrils and the sun is on my hair,
And the angry winds are buffeting the capes on either hand.
I have left the streets behind me. Oh, I'm better here than there,
For the ocean ships, the sailing ships come beating in to Portland,
The grim and white-toothed ocean ships,
The fleeting gray-winged sailing ships,
The gaunt and battered whaling ships
Come beating in to land.

RETURN

I STOOD upon the sands beside the sea,
The waves went from me, laughing on the
bar,
Then, like naughty children,
Staggering back across the yellow sands
Repentantly,
Bearing in their outstretched hands
The evening star,
The waves came back to me.

I stood within the crowded market place
And joy went from me in a flood of song,
When lo! through all the mart
A miracle! for echoed,—magnified in every
face
The joy poured back into my heart.

I stood within the garden in the dawn
And saw with bated breath
The failing flicker of the last lone star
Slain by the shafts of light,

And near at hand pathetically white
A young rose lying in the arms of Death,
Then smiled, remembering
How the waves came again across the bar.

TO THE MUSE

I HAVE ever praised thy name, O Singer of Songs.
In the hush of the blinding dawn in my barefoot
days,
Knee-deep in the fields dew-cool where the robin sings
And the daisy wakes,
And the swallow, mad with the morning, swoops and
swings,
Dropping bright rain of rippling song and shakes
Joy from his wings,
Touched in my dumb child soul and set apart
In the lonely ways,
Aching and tense
Knowing thy presence,
In my inarticulate heart
I have sung thy praise.

*But thou with gracious head mist-veiled and bent
Hast turned as from an unworthy instrument.*

I have ever sung thy praise, O Singer of Songs.
In the foolish pride of my youth in the heat of noon
When the roses scented the morning, trembling sweet,
And the buttercups gilded my feet,

To the Muse

And the bumblebees boooming amid the clover
Said to the brooding birds "The June is over";
And close on the heels of June
The hot hay winds from the meadows made reply
With a breath of July,
Proud of my towering strength,
Feeling at length
Sure of my wings,
Apart in the lonely ways,
Secure in a sense of the beauty of things
With my uncouth tongue I have sung thy praise.

*But thou disdainfully thy head hast bent
And turned as from an unworthy instrument.*

Bewildered with grief, weary into the night
Down the long roads of darkness I have strayed,
Hearing no sound although to left and right
In the writhing trees the battling storm wind swayed,
Blind though the north was kindled with the light
Of flashing swords in tournament arrayed,
And underneath the arching ferns there might be seen
Fire-flies like fairy lamps wandering through the green
In vague, uncertain flight,
Miserable with pain,
Sick with uneasy thoughts, regretttings vain,
Lost and afraid,
I knew nor sight nor sound when lo! again
Upon my throbbing senses, drawn and tense,

To the Muse

Stole a sweet comforting without a name
As of one who came
And touched with gentle hands of perfect art
The dumb strings of my heart,
Waking them into speech, misery's dull release,
Waking them into peace,
Life and content,

*As though, O hidden Singer, thou hadst leant
An instant o'er thine instrument.*

O Singer of Songs, eternal, beyond praise
Or fame,
In the chill winter of the last lone days
My tongue shall speak thy name,
Great beyond greatness, fairer than all art,
Knowing that life has given me too much
That for a breath the lutestrings of my heart
Have answered to thy touch,
That for one flying hour thy breath has stirred
To melody unheard
This heart else dumb, and that thy hand has leant
For one brief, perfect hour upon thine instrument.

TO A CHILD THAT DIED AT BIRTH

SWEET be thy sleep, oh! thou who like a dream
Camest in the night.

Thy soul, long used to Paradise, too frail
To bear the light.

We held thee all too close; we did not know
Dreams are too frail to press,
And wakened shivering in the cold gray dawn
To loneliness.

IT'S BETTER TO BREAK AWAY

O H, it's better to break away
When the heart is dull,
Cleanly and clearly away.
But some day, some day
Life will come back to the full,
Love will come back to the full
Some day.

And I will come back to you
Over the sea,
And your hands shall welcome me,
And perhaps your kisses too,
But your eyes will look away.
Ah, sweetheart, sweetheart,
If you but knew,
Love has come home to stay
To-day.

A SONG

NO bud more swift to greet the spring,
No bee to suck the clover,
No lark to rise on morning wing
Than I to meet my lover.

For though the lark's with rapture mad
And earth's blithe soul flows over,
There is no other heart as glad
As mine that greets my lover.

THE MERRY MONTH OF MAY

I CAME upon a lilac spray
A-bending and a-bowing
Upon the wind of merry May.
The sun smiled broadly in the sky,
And how I laughed as I passed by,
For it was such a merry way
The lilac had of bowing.

Through shady vales I walked along
And heard a bluebird singing,
And paused awhile to hear his song.
The sun paused, too, in sympathy,
And deigned to laugh awhile with me,
For it was such a merry song
The bluebird was a-singing.

I reveled in long, golden days
When May was in the hedges,
And earth a-tune with thrush's lays.
And as for us—the sun and I—
We held our breath and tiptoed by,
Lest we profane the sacred ways
Of Maytime in the hedges.

The Merry Month of May

Oh! those were golden hours and free.
All in the merry Maytime!
Then brooklets gurgled merrily,
And all the Springtime's treasured yields,
And all the lore of woods and fields
Were open as a book to me
All through the merry Maytime.

THE SONG OF BALDER

THERE came in the floodtime of the year
Balder from the shades,
And lifting up his eyes e'en to the heavens
He touched his harp and sang.

“Behold the stars that rock upon their course,
Beating through clouds like ships
That breast the maddened fury of the sea,
And then like candles in the wind
Before the tempest of onrushing light
Flicker and die.
Now the chill breathing earth
Shivers and blows across the gusty fields,
And icy fingers
Turn back the tattered pages of the night,
And lo! within the portals of the east
See the frail ghost of Freya to her murmurous
 lips
Pressing the rose of dawn,

“Below my feet a river curls
Silently slipping through far reaching fields,
A golden river pensioned of the sun.
Yet lift your eyes——

The Song of Balder

You may not see its source,
Nor I, nor any man,
But if we follow back along its banks,
Touched with a veil of silver mist that clings
Like dim forgetfulness on buried years.
See the wide stream of glory and of fame
That breathes of god-like men
Who died for Woden.
Yea, for Woden and their father's gods
And recked the world well lost
'Ghosts,' ye cry,
Only ghosts,
Cold breaths of sea damp wandering from the
night,
No more.
And strong men fought and bled,
Suffered and sorrowed more than human strength
All for a phantom god,
And with their sacrifice of blood and pain
And stern, heroic dust
Built up a temple—to the empty air.
Oh! mighty Love that moves behind the world,
Oh! mighty Love that moves men's hearts to tears,
They in their blindness looked upon Thy face.

"There came a Shepherd into Galilee
And Woden fell.
Yea, Woden fell because mankind had found
A higher step toward God—as Woden was

The Song of Balder

In days forgotten.

Oh! mighty Love that moves behind the world,
Oh! mighty Love that moves men's hearts to
tears,

Thou in Thy wisdom taught Thyself to men
Wisely to their needs.

"Now the soft ev'ning opens like a rose
Upon the hills,
And shadows fall like petals from the clouds
Purple as heather,
And still below the dim horizon's edge
Spear'd troops are marching,
Long, golden spear-shafts glinting in the sun,
And banners trailed in crimson.

"All's in the making as the evening is;
Time's in his youth.

Ye paint Death and Time all in one image.
Crown ye Death with Rosemary,
Wash his feet in the rivers of forgetfulness,
Crown ye Time with rose-buds,
Strew the young years underneath his feet.
All's in the making,
And all our praisings and our scorns
Are but the faint beginnings of a creed.
We cannot see the end.

"Now is the breathing space 'twixt light and
dark,

The Song of Balder

When spirits of dead flowers come a-iptoe
To light the candles at the shrine of night,
And I am only a poor heathen god
Forever unbelieved.

Yet must I speak.

Satisfy the cravings of your hearts,
Oh, ye who in the nighttime faint beneath
The beauty of the stars.

And find ye to your need
A god, oh, vagrant hearted!

Worship at the shrine that seemeth highest,
And be it War or Peace or mightiness,
Or gentleness or laughter or the light
Of beauty in the eyes of her you love,
Or innocence or knowledge or the strength
Of men or little children, or the shade
That lies across the meadows when the spring
Plants violets there,

Ye still shall worship truth,
For every god and every creed
That shines in the still eyes of lonely men,
And every old belief that wrings the heart
To ecstasy, and every new
That shakes the soul with darkness and with
doubt

Are fleeting shadows of the living God,
The Power that moves behind the Universe,
The Love that moves men's hearts to tears."

The Song of Balder

Night's trailing garment brushed across the
grass,
And the soft shadows
Melted and mingled blotting earth and sky,
And like a shadow Balder passed again
Into the shades.

LONELINESS

SOMETIMES at night
I feel your arms around me and the old
Still pain of unresponsiveness,
The bitter passion of your lips that press
On lips so cold
And passionless;
See the hard knowledge grow
To terror in your eyes, the broken pride
Dead that upheld you so,—
Ah, God, could I have died!

I could have loved you, but for that and this;
Had you been so and so,
Or spoken thus, or not, or were your kiss
More passionate, or less, how could I know?
Or you who could not guess
Close in your arms my utter loneliness?

MADCAP APRIL

MADCAP April's running wild.
By the brown brook I have caught her
Trailing white feet in the water,
Gleeful as a naughty child.

In the tree tops I have seen
April of the laughing eyes
Where the bare, cold boughs have been,
Laughing at a dream of green
Born of sheer surprise.

Dainty crimson tree tops flare
To a sky of perfect blue;
Coral branches carven fair
Swaying in the waves of air
As April bends
The boughs and rends
The web and lets the heavens through.

Madcap April's dancing by,
Her bright hair of silver gold
Trails behind her through the sky,
Glorious fold on fold.

Madcap April

And loosened in her flight drop down
Dandelions from her crown.

Silver April, loved and feared,
For thy pranks the more endeared,
Wilt thou never venture down?
With a twinkle in her eye,
See, she bends in answer sly,
Tweaking the grim mountain's beard,
Laughing at his mighty frown.
And the skies smile and reprove her,
And the hearts of poets love her,
Laughing loud as they discover
Their own youth in this sweet rover
With the laughter of a child.
April, running wild.

RECOMPENSE

WHAT was it that she told me yestereve
Slipping the troth-ring back into my hand?
She did not love me,—dared not to deceive,—
My true friend ever—could I understand?
And bending in the old, confiding way
She sighed, “Love comes not at the call again.”
And wept to bring me trouble,—but to-day
I do not feel the pain.

For I have drunk of Lethe in the night,—
Star waters, crystal white,—
And I have bathed my hands in early dew,
Beginning life anew;
And laid my dead love by,
Swathed in haughty ceremonys of dead dreams,
In a dim place lit by the voice of streams
And guarded by the frail shades of light hours
In a low grave of flowers.

LAKE ST. SACRAMENT

I'VE come to-day
A long, long way
From Lake St. Sacrament.

Before my eyes
The village lies
Beneath the waning crimson skies;
On either hand
The corn shocks stand—
The tousled sentinels of a forgotten land.

Across the hills
The whip-poor-wills
Fill the young dusk with mournful cry,
And from stone walls
The cricket calls
And swooping black bats, squeaking, circle
swiftly by.

The bright clouds swoon
And vanish soon,
And the bright cup of the new moon
Tilted anew

Lake St. Sacrament

In hands of blue
Baptizes the still-breathing earth with holy
dew.

Weary I creep
Away to sleep
Among the corn shocks, lonely, spent.
I've come to-day
A long, long way
From Lake St. Sacrament.

Above my head
The boughs have spread
Their canopy of gold and red,
And on my path
Like smoldering wrath
The year has left its brown and crimson
aftermath.

Late berries wink
Upon the brink
Of every crystal flowing stream,
And in green dells
The far cow bells
Fill with a human note these fairy hills of
dream.

Once more the air
Turns back my hair,

Lake St. Sacrament

And stirs the woods and lingers there.
And over all
The sly nut's fall
Is heard, and squirrels scampering to their
carnival.

Aroused from sleep
The glad waves leap
From contemplative depths beneath,
And purple blue
Across the view
The wide lake laughs and shows the white-
ness of its teeth.

I hear through all
The crow's hoarse call
Mellowly through rich distance fall,
And pause to eat
Where two brooks meet,
And laughing, hold a furtive converse, gay
and sweet.

Now through my dreams
The moonlight streams
Across the lake in wavering line,
And from the hills
The night wind fills
My heart with homely scents of balsam and
of pine.

Lake St. Sacrament

I seem to feel
The slender keel
Beneath me tip and turn and reel,
As on dark tides.
Past grim cliff sides
My frail canoe, tip-tilted like a flower,
glides.

I seem to see
How daintily
The fairy hills and waves are blent—
I've come to-day
A long, long way
From Lake St. Sacrament.

A WINTER SUNSET

I WONDER if those dim, calm sunset skies
Are not the reflex of some paradise,
That slim, white, feathered cloud an angel's wing,
That breathless hush an angel listening.

BEAUTY OF EARTH

ON the cliff edge over the tumbled sea
I and the wind and you,
And you were crowned with a crown of gold,
And the sea was blue.

Your shoulder touched my arm, and the wind
Came from some far off place
And blew your hair from its fastenings
Across my face.

I was sick for the kingdoms of the moon,
But the beauty of earth sufficed.
I will be pagan all my days
And forswear the Christ.

DANDELIONS

THE sky is blue beyond the tower;
 Across the dandelion fields
The wind is telling the hour,
Playfully blowing the tufted seeds
From each nodding flower.

See how they dance as the wind skips by
Jauntily chucking them under the chin
While the grave sun winks his languid eye
With a cheerful grin.
And tossed with elfish glee on high
White puffs of down are drifting through the sky.

THE LITTLE HOUSE

THE little house where I live is built against the
sky

Among the friendly chimney pots up a creaking stair,
It's like the road to heaven that is perilous and high,
But the lamp is always lighted and the door stands
open there.

The little house where I live, it is so small and low
I think it is a house of cards built on a whimsy frame.
Sometimes I want to pet it like a kitten that I know,
And I love it with a laughing love that's like a little
flame.

TO RUPERT BROOKE

LAST of the troubadours, whose wind swept lute
Lies still and mute
On Syros' sea-washed isle,
Where mile on mile
The blue Ægean sea untroubled lies,
Sunset, sunrise
Lean on your quiet breast
And wake no laughter in your dim, unseeing eyes.

As children, with their mother stricken dead
Swift and alone, run fearless to her bed,
Confident of the warm, awaiting arms,
These things you loved creep to you undismayed,
Stars and the sun and storms.
But we who have seen death, shaken and afraid,
Turn from your peace with heart's uncomforted.

And yet
How should we dream you ever could forget
Those winds you loved, and every cherished thing,
Young grass and spring,
And the blue heaven's laughter and the stars,
And men and love and wars;

To Rupert Brooke

The high heart's courage, truth, and her fair fame,
And the music of her name,
England your best beloved.

I think that those are wisest who still know
Your breath upon their brow,
Your youth in earth's young beauty, the glad look of
you

When spring wells up anew,
Your voice upon the brooks and winds and trees,
And children's voices and the laugh of men,
And women's skirts rustling, and songs and seas
Bring back your voice again
That was a part of these.

Love dies not but abides from age to age
Our human heritage,
And your great love that was so proud and free
Is immortality.

So we who love you find our peace in this,
Death lies not where love is.

There was a life that long beside mine own
Lived as mine own and not apart from me.
Dying, my soul is richer for that soul,
My life shall be
The purer for that death,
And round about my ways
Love and the memory of completed days
Winds like a living breath.

To Rupert Brooke

So you who had such store of love to give
Among earth's greatest, you have freely given
Love and the seal of love, your life, and even
All that life means and is and was to you,
The will to live,
And the little things men feel and think and do,
Glad for her sake that was your best beloved, England,
Unknowing that your Splendid Heart could raise
Above the bitterness of darkened days
Her heart as high as heaven.

Ah! God, could I have stood beside you there
Playing man's greatest part before the years
Blot with inevitable night the sun,
And the last echoes of our smiles and tears
Drift down the windless darkness, one by one,
For I have held it to be best of all,
Man's supreme right
And highest pride,
To see the sum of life, the sweet and gall,
The thrilling power, and to turn aside
For love, out of the sunlight and the day
Into the harder way,
Into the night.
To me, alas, denied.

But I shall find some spot remote and strange
From the swift whirl and change
Of temporal things,

To Rupert Brooke

Some quiet corner of my heart where clings
Eternally
The memory of you,
And there, perchance, musing upon some night in
spring,
A warm, damp wind will bring
Across dark, heaving leaves of purple sea
A breath of the blue Mediterranean space,
And in the twilight of that place
Will hover a still light of fire and dew
Twin born of earth and heaven, and in that hour
Wild and elusive as the pale moon-flower
That dies where light and shadow curve and break
Along the margin of an inland lake;
But I shall understand,
And in that time, perchance, I shall have power
To lift the torch that from your failing hand
Slipped like a star out of the weary sky
When daylight creeps on darkness, and to speak
Those things you might have spoken since that hour
When life and death upon your pallid cheek
Took alternate stand,
In wavering tide of battle passed, repassed,
Till in the weary dawn your soul at last
Saw the still sunrise on the dim, Lethean strand.
Perchance I shall not play too mean a part
If to the mighty summons of your heart
My heart is true,
And if to future lives I shall pass on

To Rupert Brooke

When I am gone
The torch I had of you.

Stilled is the lute, O Master, hushed the song.
But in the twilight hour, the hour of sleep,
Come all these little things you loved and creep
Near to your quiet breast,
Hoping that as children hope for the light that lies
In the mother eyes.
Murmurous evenings break upon your rest
And winds that laugh and weep,
Bird notes and the light step of the spring
Passing and whispering,
And the voice of ocean calling to your hill
Yet you lie so still.
But somewhere where the winds of heaven have birth
In some far corner of the earth
Lone sea-caves in their purple depths prolong
The echoes of your song.
Somewhere in earth or heaven still there lies
The warm, glad look, the smile of your immortal eyes.

STAR GOSSIP

MY window's far above the place
Where voices hum and traffic jars,
And sometimes when it's very dark
I sit and gossip with the stars.

On cloudy nights I'm friendly with
The window lights across the way,
But when it's dark I lean far out
And call the stars to come and play.

Oh, I'm not lonely any more
For country ways and far seashores
When all my friendly little stars
Come tumbling in from out-of-doors.

LOST SONGS

JUST as the winds of the west lie on the heart of
the sunset
Wrapped in a saffron cloud where the red light comes
and goes,
So the souls of lost songs, fled from the lips of the
singer
Lie on the laps of blue violets lulled to eternal re-
pose.

But sometimes when the moon is on the wane
And the stars seem vaguely stencilled on the sky,
When darkness falls upon the earth like rain
And eerie footfalls pass us closely by,
Then far across the valley
Where the wood-nymphs dally
With lily white feet in the sparkling stream,
You will find the lost dreams sleeping
Where the river nymphs are weeping
And in pools of purple fragrance the violets dream.

A WHITE SAIL

THE light of whitest lilies
Silvered all the angry sea,
And presently
The crimson dawn clouds fluttered up
Like butterflies in the tilted cup
Of a pink anemone.
And far away, far away,
Like a rose leaf dropped in the path of the
day
By the fleeing midnight pale,
A white sail, a white sail,
Came drifting in to me.

IRREMEDIABLE

THEY were lovers once, but who shall cross again
That swift abyss dividing heart and heart.
Their eyes once warm with love are turned apart,
Cool as the sea with unremembered pain,
On other aims and other ventures bent
In soft unconscious sadness, silently.
It is not love or lover they lament
But that so fair a thing should cease to be

THE ETERNAL EXILE

I SOMETIMES think we meet so carelessly,
As you and I once met, our hands, our eyes.
And smiled unknowing.
How could we know that our two lives were flowing,
Swift as the sea gull flies,
Inevitable as the cool winds blowing,
Each unto each as the river to the sea?

We spoke of trivial things, and our light laughter
Met each half-spoken jest, and followed after
In meaningless, happy mirth.
For a few fleeting hours we trod the earth
Unconscious of a change upon the wind.
And then you spoke,—or I—
Some passing thought, some dream, and mind to mind
Leapt with a kindling light as in old wars
A watch-fire blazing high among the stars
Called forth a thousand beacons in reply,
Signalling through the night.
With the first breathlessness of glad surprise
Our glances met, and now we saw the light
Behind the eyes.

The Eternal Exile

What boots it how we spoke of God and man,
Of poetry and truth?
Where reason ended and where faith began,
Philosophy,
Science and its unfathomed mystery
The living breath?
To know the unknowable of life and death
Is the eternal privilege of youth.
Like an explorer each fared forth to find
The other's mind,
And at the end
With a shy hush of awe we spoke the name of friend.
“Not light acquaintanceship,
True friends,” you said, and I
Assented. Fate stood smiling by,
Finger on lip.

We said, “When love and faith are blended,
And mind is tuned to mind, and eye to eye
Looks with a level gaze, why one so friended
Might still give thanks to God when joy is ended
And peace gone by,
Holding the clasp of one strong hand more sweet
Than the echo of a thousand careless feet
That know not whom they seek and drift apart
With each distraction of the heart.”

We laughed that were so wise.
But in the quiet shadow of your eyes

The Eternal Exile

No laughter lay,
But such a look as comes at early morn
Into the sky before the light is born
Presaging day.
Like a lone watcher on the hills I lay,
Raised my still glance to meet the quiet sky
And my slow heart took on a faster beat
Unknowing why.

I scarce can picture now the first still light
Of those new days.
Mornings and evenings poised twixt night and night
Unmoving in a veil of summer haze,
Like that still afterglow that lingers on
In arrested motion when the sun is gone,
A frozen beauty painted on the air,
Seeming eternal, beyond change, so there
Time lingered on from silver hour to hour
And held his breath;
And the gardens held their flower,
And the birds their song, and you and I were free
Of the past and future, in eternity
Forgetting life and death.

But that was long ago, and Time astir
Has shut the gates on our other selves that were
In that far Eden. For you spoke,
And with the silence broke
The enchantment, and my voice that answered woke

The Eternal Exile

Time from his sleep,
And the angel of our conscious love to keep
The gates and bar forever our return.
The future loomed
Upon us, and the past upraised its head
That had been dead.
The flowers bloomed
And died, and the days moved on
From sun to sun.
And our hearts turned earthward, moving unafraid
Down quiet ways of joy into the shade,
Most like to gods, who, leaving what we knew,
Dared to know all, and yet most human too.

So fared we forth from Eden with our kind,
Knew pride and grief and shame,
Joy like the joy of God that has no name,
Calm trust and that strange fear that fills the mind
With a hundred tortuous images, fearing most
Unworthiness, and the great cost
Of love such lack must pay, till love grew blind
To love, and yet, strange paradox, believed
What most it doubted and was still deceived.

But you and I held more than this,
Kinship of mind and thought,
Full recompense for that poor brittle bliss
Of look and kiss
So dearly bought.

The Eternal Exile

We looked to the same star, dreaming our dreams
Near as two souls may gain.
This wrested we from Time. What matter if
The price be pain?

And half of this we understood and said
Each to the other with slow, faltering word,
And the thrush heard
And thrilled us with his music overhead.
How should we know that we too were earth-wise
Who had looked love in the eyes?

We said, if I remember,
That the May
Withers away
And falls in golden showers
In September,
And the hot perfume of June's crimson flowers
Endures but an hour's
Delay.
But that still beauty that pervades the year!
Lives on forever, changing, beyond change,
Wearing a thousand forms, forever near,
Forever far and strange.
So love itself, changed and unchanged, lives on
When the crown of love is gone.

The thrush's voice and the brook's hurrying feet
Filled the green shadows of our cool retreat

The Eternal Exile

With music, and our souls with quietness,
Folded our lives away
From the heat and press
Of the world's day.
And our talk fell to less and less
And died away.

Then your voice said from where you sat apart:
"E'en love itself must hold in its hot heart
Some quiet spot of shade where the broken word
And tremulous voice of passion is not heard,
And the near lips and the chance touch of hand
Waken no madness in the quiet blood,
But the eyes rest on eyes that understand
In simple quietude,
Else love must turn to madness, nor remain
Secure and sane."

So said we while the brook beneath our feet,
Forever changing, ever still the same,
With laughter sweet,
And many a pause and wayward murmurings
And silver utterance of unknown things
Slipped by and passed forever. And birds came
And bathed and broke the surface with their wings,
And the wood thrush sang unseen. You spoke to me
Of the eternal charm and mystery
Of flowing water and the changeless tides,
And those dim things beyond the mind of man,
Space and eternity.

The Eternal Exile

And then we smiled, thinking we two alone
Of all the ages and of all the lands,
Standing astride of Time, we two have known
The unknowable, who have clasped hands
And loved beyond all measure. So we dreamed,
And like the sun-splashed river streamed
Time underneath our feet. Now that is over,
And the loud silence in our hearts has grown
And filled our lives where the clear voice of the lover
Is silent, and the call of earth is loud
To our attentive hearts, and love's faint breath
Is stilled in death,
If love can die. So much at least is Time's
Who has laid away our loves that were too proud.

Yet what we said was wiser than we knew,
For what has been lives on
And bears its fruit in some far other world
When the mortal seed is gone.
That which has been changes like the tide
That ebbs and flows
And wears from dawn to dark a thousand hues,
Grays and blues,
Aquamarine and rose,
And in the fading light
Takes home to its still breast the tired ghosts of stars
At night,
Yet still lives on through changes that impress
Its surface for a moment and depart

Singly and silently to change and die,
Reborn and redstroyed relentlessly,
Yet cannot perish into nothingness.
There is no nothingness, not even love
When heart grows strange to heart.
For that which lived its poor brief bloom and died,
The visible symbol of the eternal truth,
Pride of our pride,
Youth of our youth,
Like the look in the eyes of a friend
Lights our dim hour with love unto the end,
Fills the unechoing chambers of our lives
With sense of unseen comradeship, a peace,
A presence in the room.
Nor ever loneliness or gloom
Shall press upon us though our lives are strange.
What's mortal knows indifference and change,
But what's immortal has no power to cease.
Love grew in our eyes to fitful flower,
And lived its hour
A thing remote, apart,
And died and left despair.
That too is dead. But still the love eternal in our
heart
Shall bloom again perhaps some otherwhere.

RAIN ON THE ST. LAWRENCE

COOL gusts of wet, sweet winds that whip my dress,
Harsh rain upon my brow,
And the delighting, lace-like filminess
Of snowy spray flung from the lurching prow;
The engine's purposeful and rhythmic breath,
The living jar and strain
Of well-matched timbers that have passed through death
And found new life again;
The slim, white seagulls stooping to their prey,
The cold sublimity of sky and flood,
The misty earth, the heaven's somber gray,
The spangled river sweeping on its way—
All this is in my blood.
I lean to meet the waves that storm the bow,
I hold my face to feel the driving rain,—
Oh! wild, unchastened heart, why yearnest thou
To taste the uttermost of joy and pain?

TWILIGHT ON THE ST. LAWRENCE

OH! the clear, starless, lingering edge of day!
The young moon, pale against the radiance,
lending
A modest glow to mark the quiet ending
Of light that lives alway.
The low-hung lights of ships, the home lights friend-
ing
The stranger dusk; far voices hushed and holy;
The idle murmur of the silver-flowing
Eternal river, and the pale moon bending
Lowly, lowly,
To kiss the clustering isles,
And from across sweet waters,—miles and miles
Of lakes,—sweet winds soft-blowing,—
Young moon beyond the river, stay your going.

STARLIGHT

I HAVE lain on the cool grass under the stars
And felt the circling of the universe,
The tossing of that ship we call the earth
Upon the ground swell of eternity.
The earth sways beneath me, and my soul
Faints with the dizziness of great distances.

SONNET SEQUENCE

1

I HAVE said farewell and smiled and drawn away
My hand from clasping yours and let you go.
The gray storm curtains folding round you throw
No gleam of light across the parting day.
The grief of those who lift vain hands and pray,
Having said, the last farewell, weighs on me so
There are no tears can ease my utter woe.
Fear calls to heel and I must needs obey.

But now deep peace succeeds the parting storm,
And silence lies where wild unrest has been.
Thank God, thank God who pities still our pain,
Across the lonely miles that lie between
Your heart is beating and your hands are warm,
And we who grieve may some day meet again.

2

This little, old, blue locket that I wear
Hung close against my heart, how light it lies,
And yet the burden of the tears and sighs

Sonnet Sequence

And the crown of all my happy life hangs there.
The relics of my faith,—a lock of hair
Cut from the dear brow of one loved, a prize
Too rich for such a shrine, the pictured eyes,
Grave eyes that read my soul and lay it bare.

Some find their God in churches, some at sea,
Or high among the hills, but at my shrine
I teach my head to bow and bend the knee,
Feeling the throbbing of a heart divine
In this strong love that binds your soul to mine,
In this dear passion between you and me.

3

Dear days of our acquaintance! One by one
I turn them slowly over, lingering
On each light laugh and look and smile and tone
Fraught with unspoken meaning, fingering
These faded flowers I sought to understand
Dreaming they held some word unuttered,
And then, dear God, thy lips upon my hand,
Thy lips, dear love, that laid our friendship dead.

Dear days of careless, sweet inconsequence,
Of undreamed happiness of glance and touch,
Of budding hopes and glories, and the sense
That all things matter much but none too much;

Sonnet Sequence

Dear days, you have your perfect crown in this,
That he who made you killed you with a kiss.

4

Dear, I am not indifferent as thou art
To praise and blame, nor strong to smile at grief,
Nor is there strength or virtue in my heart
To match thy valiant might of unbelief.
I too have dreamed, beloved, all my days,
And dared the hidden fastness of the wind,
Yet am more used to walk the common ways,
Afraid to tread the barren heights behind.

Greatness is all too lonely, yet I know
I still should dare to climb if only thou
Wilt take my hand in thine and show me how,
Nor grow impatient when my feet are slow,
Still dare to climb and see and understand,
Strong in the warm, dear comfort of thy hand.

5

Oh! my beloved, as I dream to-night
Before the blazing hearth, stirred through and through
By the shrill violin, the ruddy light
Frames in a sudden glow the face of you.
Now as before your eyes are turned to mine
Full of swift fire and dimmed with sudden tears,

Sonnet Sequence

And with one indrawn breath the flame divine
Flares heavenward that shall light all future years.

No need for meeting lips or clasping hands.
The poor, dull, clogging body holds its breath.
Cut from eternity, a flaming sign
To mark the eternal, that brief moment stands.
Earth, Heaven, and the truths of life and death
Hang tremulous between your eyes and mine.

6

Stand farther off, beloved, I cannot bear
Thy dear disturbing nearness very long,
I who must needs be still as mountain air,
And free as mountain tempests, and as strong.
The fortress in my bosom heaved and shook
Like a beleagured citadel, when thou,
With the triumphant army of thy look,
Drew nearer yet and nearer yet, and now—

Oh! my beloved, for pity stand away.
I have no strength to keep or let thee go.
I who have planned such wise, firm things to say
Am brave but to be silent, for I know
I have nor strength nor power nor will to fear
The untried future, love, with thee so near.

SWEETHEART, WAKE UP

SWEETHEART, wake up.
The day is born anew.
In every flower cup
Sparkles the dew,
And swallows swoop and swing,
And bluebirds sing.

Sweetheart, arise!
The dawn's young blushes pale.
Across the splendor of the eastern skies
The wild goose squadrons go
Statelily slow,
Sail upon sail.

Sweetheart, come out. Earth's wonders manifold
Knock on thy drowsy lids.
What alchemy turns the red dawn to gold?
What dreamer of the sandy wastes of old
Painted against the sky the pyramids?
What God between the past and the to be
Hung pendent like a jewel on a chain
This shining hour,—

Sweetheart, Wake Up

The new, clear sunlight, pure of any stain,
The dew on leaf and flower,
The warm, dear scent of clover,
The swallows swinging over
Sprinkling the morning air with song like rain,
Love kin to pain,
Thee
And me,
Thou so dear beloved, and I thy lover?
Love is the theme the singing world's about!
Sweetheart, come out!

THE BARON'S DAUGHTER

THE Baron sat in his ancient hall,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay.

He was bent and bowed who once was tall.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

And once he sighed for his love long dead.
Hey, ho, with a roundelay.

And, "Had I only a child," he said.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

The fairies brought her in the night,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
And laid her on a pillow white.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

The fairies danced around his chair,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
Sweet as roses and thin as air.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

They sang aloud to the cold white moon,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
"Beware the spell of the fairy tune."
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

The Baron's Daughter

The Baron's daughter grew tall and fair,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay.

The gold of the sun was in her hair.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

The Baron's daughter grew fair and wild,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
Fair and wild as a fairy's child.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

The Baron loved her passing well,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
And guarded her from the fairy spell.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

He gave her a cross on a silken band,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
But the silk was woven in fairyland.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

There came a minstrel to the hall,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
And he was young and straight and tall.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

They sat him down at the table long,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
They sat him down the knights among.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

The Baron's Daughter

The minstrel sang a fairy tune,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
The knights fell down as in a swoon.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

The fairies danced on the oaken stair
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
But the Baron slept in his carven chair.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

His daughter crept to the minstrel's knee,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
And white as the hillside snows was she,
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

The Baron's daughter raised her head,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
And "Stranger, who may you be?" she said.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

He bent him down and drew her near,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
And looked in her eyes that were dark with
fear.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

The maid has gone from her father's hall.
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
She is gone with her lover so straight and tall.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

The Baron's Daughter

He has taken her home o'er hill and lea,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
To the cold white moons of her own countree.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

The Baron sits in his ancient hall,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
He is bent and bowed that once was tall.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

He has sought her far but he knoweth well,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
No man may break the fairy spell
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

He has sought her far through sun and rain,
Hey, ho, with a roundelay,
But she will never come back again.
Oh, the lanes are white with may.

INEFFABLE

WHAT wilt thou?" came the ocean's call to me.
"What wilt thou?" sang the bird upon the bough.

What can I say? 'Tis only thou and thou.
How can I answer to thy cry, O sea?
The bluebird's song, a mocking melody,
Falls from the painted heav'n, fading now,
The late sun sets beyond the mountain's brow,
And stars peep through the cloud-folds, silently.

A breeze comes from the meadows, soft, and cool,
And sweet, as wandering from fields of broom;
And mirrored in the bosom of the pool
The sunset opens slowly into bloom.
Still, still the ocean's voice comes in to me.
How may I answer to thy cry, O sea?

ENTREAT ME NOT

ENTREAT me not to love you. All my heart
Is very cool and still. No swifter beat
Leaps up to meet
Your nearness when you stand
Beside me, or your lips upon my hand.

I have given you so much, gifts without end,
My thoughts, my hopes and dreams, my faiths and
fears,
Long days of laughter, called you friend
Through all the years;
All that my mind can give and all my will,
And still
You are not satisfied.
The best I have to give you cast aside,
Claiming the last, high gift,—alas, I know
I do not love you so.

Yet sometimes when you're gone the long days
through
I have great need of you.

I AM GROWN A WOMAN

I AM grown a woman, so they say,
In some strange way,
And songs and laughter stir
New visions, new desires.
I think they do not know that oftener
I dream of far, cool seas and red campfires,
And brooks of childhood, chattering and sweet
Around bare feet.

But when I dream to-day
A new, hard pain
Shuts on my heart lest I should pass again
That old, glad way.
I am grown a woman, so they say.

THE WEST WIND AND A ROSE

I BREATHED upon her petals pink,
For she was wondrous fair.
I crept into her hidden heart
And found it golden there;
I swayed her on her graceful stem
And begged her for a kiss.
In all the world I have not found
A flower as sweet as this.

Fair courtesans of field and wood
May woo me as I pass,
But I'd give all their beauty for
A rose leaf on the grass.

IF FAITH SHOULD DIE

IF faith should die,
And love immutable grow cold and change,
And you and I
So loving and so loved grow vexed and strange,
What should I do, O God, what should I do,
Calling on empty air, clasping the shadow that was
you?

Yet still through windy ways from sky to sky
The wild geese fly.
And still the clear dawn brushes with her feet
Lush pastures, cool and sweet,
And I shall find new paths and other ways,
And young, new days,
Forgetting that I dreamed a long night through
Mad dreams of earth and heaven and hell and you.

POSEIDON OF MANY MOODS

THE tempest stands before the gates of heaven
Clad in a purple tunic,
Crouched like a man about to run a race.
And now, the signal given,
Comes on apace.
God of the merciful waters,
Hold thy white steeds awhile!
The prayers of thy daughters,
The tears of thy daughters
Implore thee, Poseidon, smile.
God, thou hast taken our all;
Render us back our own!
The light is gone from thy hall,
And thine eyes are cold as stone.
Thy bosom is wide and lone.
God, give them back to us, back to us!

Poseidon lays him down between the lands,
Resting his head upon the sands.
His white hair washes in and floats away
Where children play,
And his broad bosom breathes, serene and deep,
As though in sleep.

Poseidon of Many Moods

But slyly under drooping lids he sees
The barefoot babies romping unawares,
The water splashing high about their knees,
And slyly smiles to see them jump and run,
Bright-headed, in the sun,
With eyes as young as theirs.
Oh, gentle God of children, lend thine ear.
Poseidon hear!

Who has not known it that Poseidon loves the red
wine

Grown on high Olympus when the gods were there?
In the upturned sunset cup, see the royal red shine,
Wafted to his thirsty lips through leagues of limpid
air.

Oh, the dance that follows after!

Oh, the breathless, deathless laughter!

The nipping whiteness of his teeth bared against the
sky.

Oh, the drunken, reeling billows
Decked with lace from mermaids' pillows,
And their wild, exultant laughter as the cold sprays
fly.

Drunken king, in very truth

Thou hast bound the heart of youth

And holdst it captive by the magic of thy silver tongue.

Oh, Poseidon, what divine

Vintage of the gods is thine,

Grown on high Olympus when the world was young!

Poseidon of Many Moods

Out beyond the world's edge thou liest in state,
Poseidon,
Out beyond the sea's edge, out beyond the foam,
Of interlacing coral boughs
Thou hast built thyself a house,
Out of pearly shell fish thou hast reared thyself a
home.

There the white armed Nereids play
In the spray,
And the sea nymphs dance at night
Down the moon path in a white
Radiance, bright as day.

From beyond the world's edge thy call comes in,
Poseidon,
From beyond the sea's edge o'er the curling foam:
Over half the world it comes, irresistible and compell-
ing,
And thy children answer it and gladly turn them
home.
Over all the sea's face the white sails are swelling,
Beating down the salt winds from unknown lands,
For thy voice is young and sweet, and the fading
skyline

Beckons to adventure, and the world is in our hands.
Dreams of ancient buccaneers and sailors of old
England,

Dreams of Scott, and Peary with his frozen sail

Poseidon of Many Moods

Fill our eyes with golden visions and our hearts with yearning.

All the seas are ours to roam. What reck we if we fail?

Gain or lose,

Who shall choose?

In thy hands are storm and gale.

Sails are set,

Decks are wet,

The wind is in our sail.

Blue heav'n is o'er us,

Life before us.

What reck we if we fail?

Poseidon, all-father, thy child is come home again.

Long ages since from thy bosom we rose,

Now we come back on thy bosom to roam again,

Shorten earth's span

By the life of a man

Then back to thy fount head to take our repose.

What shall come after,

Tears, then, or laughter?—

Many have striven to grasp what shall be.

Life? We did live it.

Peace? Thou wilt give it

Down in the purple green depths of the sea.

We who have taken all,

Loved and forsaken all,

Giving our hearts and our souls to life's quest,

Poseidon of Many Moods

More than the prudent wise,
We have known Paradise,
We have seen life at its worst and its best.
Poseidon, thou'st given
Better than heaven,
Knowledge to suffer and joy and be free.
Meeting death's cold kiss
We turn where oblivion is
Under the sea.

ON CASCO BAY

I

O H the romance of the ocean has caught me in a net,
The pulsing heart, the groping hands, the lips against
the sky.
The long white hands have found me and I never can
forget.
The glory and the motion, the rhythm and the fret
Are part of me, the heart of me
And shall be till I die.

II

Oh, the ships that come and go,
Oh, the breakers' hammer shocks,
Oh, the sails of burnished show,
And the hot sun on the rocks!
Oh, the blue of sea and sky,
And the wind's kiss on my lips.
Oh, the gulls that circle by,
And the dancing of the ships!

On Casco Bay

III

I hear in mournful, intermittent roar
The sweet-tongued waves upon the shore;
I see the white-capped billows of the clouds
Beat on the jagged horn of the low moon,
And evermore
Mine awed heart cries "Forbear!"
I cannot understand your song
Nor catch the rhythm of your tune.

THE GULLS

A WHIRL and ebb of gray and white
A whirr and sweep of driving wings,
Stooping, swooping, where
Far below the ocean flings
Sparkling spray to crown them kings
Of the light and air;
Swinging where the white cloud swings
Transfixed through its heart with light,
Mystically fair.

Who shall whisper what they sing
Passing swiftly on the wing
Of the rapture, fierce, undying,
And their own wild hearts replying,
Of the grandeur, cold and lone.
Yea, indeed, thrice happy he,
Who in measured melody
Makes their joy his own.
Freedom of the wind-swept air,
Glory of the painted sky
For the taking. You and I
Pent within the city's glare

The Gulls

Put our sad hearts sadly by,
Yearning unaware.

A whirl and ebb of gray and white,
A whirr and sweep of driving wings,
And far below the ocean sings
And far above in veering flight
Spirits of the storm and wind,
Trailing silver light behind,
Sport among the dark clouds, crying
Of a rapture, wild, undying,
And my own wild heart replying
In a broken melody
Singeth to the sobbing sea.

FREE VERSE

HAUNTED MUSIC

THE old violin, broken a thousand times,
Mended as many,
Scarred and battered,
Worn, old,
Has learned to answer to the passion of the
master.

Ah, the soul compelling voice of her singing.
There are eyes that wander, eyes that drowse,
Eyes full of dreams, eyes dark with passion,
Wistful eyes, eyes of attainment.

God breaks hearts and mends them
In a thousand curious ways.

WHEN ONE WAITS AT NIGHT

WHEN one waits at night
The moments creep so slowly, on such
leaden feet.

When one waits at night
The darkness is so very dark,
The silence so very still.

The beating of one's own heart is painful.
Oh, the disappointments of the footsteps that
come
And do not pause.
The darkness is so very dark,
The silence so very still
When one waits at night.

LAKE GEORGE

HILLS of my love, that I have known and loved,
To-night I know you not, you smite my heart
With a new beauty.
You have drawn a veil across your bosom.
I put out my hand, and cloud-like
The world melts and fades,
And the sunset glows through the gray mist
Upon a land of clouds.
The lake's broad breast heaves and rocks my frail
canoe.
That alone is real, bearing me through a dream.
Some one is singing the "Land of the Sky-blue
Waters."
The music lays light fingers upon me
Wringing my heart.
I who know not love, to-night I love.
I who know not grief, to-night I grieve.
I who know not joy, tremble at the knocking of light
fingers on my heart.
Hills of my love, I have come to you again,
In the land where I build my dreams I have found
you.

FAIRY TALE

THE sun shone on the east wall of the tower.
The shadow peeped around the edge
Trying to catch a glimpse of her bright pursuer.
I think the pitiful flowers weep
Because the shadow never sees the sun.
I saw the sweep of her gown as she gathered it
close
Standing a-tip toe in the corner.
Then she was gone.
The sun reached out his arms in vain.
I saw him peep into the cups of roses
Wondering if she were hiding there,
And laughed to myself.
He will never find her
Where she lies hidden in my heart.

THE BENCH BESIDE THE DOOR

I HAVE wandered the garden all around,
I have looked at the rose bush from ev'ry side,
But now I've come back to the bench beside the
door,—

You can see the roses best from there.

I have wandered over all the world,
I have seen the sun in the east and in the west,
But now I've come back to the bench beside the door,
The sun shines warmest there.

I have wandered through all the realm of dreams,
I have looked at my desire from ev'ry side,
But now I've come back to the bench beside the
door,—
'Tis only there my heart forgets itself and sings.

THROUGH THE GROVE OF DREAMS

THROUGH the grove of dreams, through the
thicket of wild speculations
I have wandered on light feet.
The dew was on my forehead, the fire eternal in my
heart.
I fancied that I had found a short cut to the stars.
I plunged recklessly through the brambles,
Brave with my dreams,
And found at my feet the broad highway
Unrolled like a scroll.
There were voices there and faces that I knew
Familiarly strange as seen through other eyes,—
How simple, sweet, and excellent is life.

DOWN THE RAINY STREET

DOWN the rainy street in a breathing space of the
rain

A man comes with a wagon of fruit.

He chants his wares in a rich, melodious voice

Full of a round and hearty cheer.

“Strawberries, strawberries, fine fruit and straw-
berries.”

Out of the distance his voice comes slowly

And fades again.

And the birds sing in the dripping branches.

SPRING MIGRATION

SEE where he sits upon the topmost bough
Singing now.

He and the sun together set a-tune
The laughing air with promises of May,
And farther off of June.

He and the sun together pass away
To northern climes, and yet they leave behind
Ropes of fair flowers for the hours to bind
The truant May.

NON OMNIS MORIAR

WHEN there shall come an ending of the tune
And all the sweet and bitter in the sum
Of one great chord the Master shall take home;
Then, when the far cry of the wailing loon
Shrills down the waters of the still lagoon
And mingles with the drowsy insects' hum,
Because I so have loved her, I shall come
To haunt once more the long, sweet, paths of June.

And when the magic moment holds the earth
When great Apollo swings below the skies,
And when, the signal of another birth,
The wheels of his supernal chariot rise,
Then you shall hear with all the birds a-tune
The heart I left to sing again in June.

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